

MAY 15 2008

**Chatman, Cheryl A NWW**

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**From:** Dan Kirschner [DKirschner@Chamber.Spokane.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2000 2:58 PM  
**To:** 'salmonstudy@usace.army.mil'  
**Subject:** Comment on EIS

**Importance:** High



EIS Comment to

Corps.doc

Please note: the attached file contains the Chamber's comments on the Corps Salmon Recovery EIS for which comments are due today.

<<EIS Comment to Corps.doc>>

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SPOKANE AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
*Linking Legacy with Opportunity*

MAY 15 2000

March 23, 2000

Department of the Army  
Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers  
Attention: Lower Snake River Study  
201 North Third Avenue  
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

**RE: The Corps' Snake River Environmental Impact Statement**

The Spokane Area Chamber of Commerce opposes Alternative 4, the only alternative that involves breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River. The EIS shows that there are uncertain biological benefits from breaching these dams. Furthermore, we believe the negative economic impacts listed in the EIS, though seriously under estimated, demonstrate certain economic harm.

The misguided focus on dam breaching is analogous to another endangered species debate that occurred more than twenty years ago. If left unattended by basic biological research, the initial focus on restoring bald eagle populations through habitat restoration alone would have yielded plenty of excellent habitat and an extinct species. It appears we are attempting to implement applied science without an adequate understanding of the basic biological and physiological systems of the species in question. The "science" to date poses more questions than answers.

For instance, are the fish that do return to spawn as fertile as their ancestors, or do environmental conditions exist that diminish the species fertility (as was the case with the bald eagle)? Do hatcheries raise fry at the same water temperatures as the environments into which they will be released? Does it make a difference? Why do recent studies show that survival today is as high as it was in the 1960's and 1970's - before the dams were built.

What is clear is that in addition to severe economic consequences, dam breaching will create significant negative environmental impacts, with loss of habitat for resident fish and wildlife and increased air pollution from trucks and from fossil fuel burning power plants. Dam removal is not a silver bullet. It is extreme and it's risky. It may not help the fish, but it will certainly hurt the economy.

The region needs a recovery plan with a clear vision, goals and priorities. It needs a plan based on a foundation of rigorous science and designed to succeed, rather than a plan based on symbolism, emotion and expediency. We need a plan that rebuilds healthy fish runs while maintaining a healthy economy. We need to restore the focus on fish recovery as opposed to breaching the dams.

Sincerely,

DAN KIRSCHNER  
Director of Public Affairs